



ECHO and Family Center Early Childhood Council

Strategic Plan

2017—2022

Updated March, 2019

Vision: Children are valued, healthy and thriving.

ECHO and Family Center Council Mission: To promote and sustain a comprehensive, high quality early childhood system which supports families and prepares children for success in school and life.

Selected Belief Statements:

The family is the foundation for the child.

Prenatal to age 6 is the most critical time for all areas of development.

Social-emotional development is key to lifelong success.

Early Childhood Council partners, including families, collaborate to create a high quality system of services and supports.

Ongoing professional development and competitive wages promote quality early childhood programs. (See Addendum 1)

Additional Belief Statements

- Children are the future of our society.
- Each child is unique and valuable.
- Each child has the right to reach his/her fullest potential.
- A safe and healthy community promotes positive child outcomes.
- Developmentally appropriate practices are critical to learning.
- Parents know their children best.
- Family diversity is respected and valued.
- Families determine if and how they receive available services and supports.
- Families have easy access to Early Childhood System.
- Families influence Early Childhood System.
- Family engagement is critical to the success of Early Childhood System.
- Identifying and building on strengths promotes healthy families and communities.
- Broad-based and diverse community involvement promotes ownership and support
- Political engagement is essential to sustain comprehensive, high-quality early childhood programs.

Addendum 2

Acronyms/Definitions

Acronym

Definition

FCDPHE	Fremont County Department Public Health and Environment
PIRGAS	Parent Infant Relationship Global Assessment Scale
PICCOLO	Parent Interactions with Children: Observations Linked to Outcomes
CPP	Colorado Preschool Program
ECARE	Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement
PDIS	Professional Development Information System
CCR	Colorado Community Response
ACES	Adverse Childhood Experiences
PIECES	Partnership in Early Childhood Education Services
Colorado Shines	Quality Rating and Improvement System for licensed childcare centers and preschools
ELG	Early Learning Guidelines
CCCAP	Colorado Child Care Assistance Program
ECHO	Early Childhood Health/Development Outcomes
LAUNCH	Linking Actions for Unmet Needs for Children's Health
TS GOLD	Teaching Strategies GOLD
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Addendum 3

ECHO & Family Center Council Associated Programs

Colorado Preschool Program - A state-funded *early* childhood education program administered by the Colorado Department of Education. CPP provides access to quality *early* childhood education for children who lack *overall* learning readiness with entry through ECHO Screening.

Crib to Kindergarten Early Childhood Mental Health – Services to support young children's emotional health through a continuum of comprehensive, individualized, culturally competent services that focus on promotion, prevention and intervention.

Early Intervention Colorado - Provides supports and services to children with developmental delays or disabilities and their families from birth until the child's third birthday.

ECHO Screening and Access – Developmental, vision and hearing screening for children age 0-5. Single process of entry into all ECHO & Family Center Council associated programs. Recruitment and enrollment for CPP, Referrals for Infant/Toddler and Preschool Special Education Evaluation, Home Visitation, Head Start, Early Head Start, Child Care and Crib to Kindergarten.

Early Head Start - Serves infants and toddlers under the age of 3, and pregnant women.

Head Start – Serves preschool children.

Maternal Wellness Committee –Provides services to help with pregnancy related depression and mood disorders.

Parents as Teachers – Promotes the optimal early development, learning and health of young children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers.

LAUNCH Together--An initiative designed to improve social, emotional, behavioral, physical and cognitive outcomes for young children (prenatal through age eight) and their families in Colorado.

Preschool Special Education - State and federally mandated program for three and four year old children who are experiencing challenges in their learning and development and meet state eligibility criteria for special education and related services.

Health and Well-Being Goal: ECHO and Family Center Council programs and services promote early childhood health and mental health through early identification, consultation and intervention.

Health and Well-Being Objectives:

- A.** Increase awareness and support to promote nurturing relationships in families and caregivers
- B.** Promote a positive social-emotional environment for children in all early learning environments, childcare centers and homes
- C.** Train and support social-emotional competencies for those individuals and providers engaged in early childhood services
- D.** Increase access and education to prenatal and maternal wellness care for women enrolled in ECHO Council and Family Center Council programs or services

Health and Well-Being Outcomes:

- A 1** Families and caregivers will demonstrate nurturing and responsive relationships
- B 1** The social-emotional environment will be positive, nurturing and promote self-regulation, learning and positive behavior of young children
- C 1** Individuals and service providers will promote and support increased positive social-emotional behaviors of adults and children
- D 1** Mothers who access prenatal and maternal wellness care programs or services will have healthy babies and nurturing relationships

Health and Well-Being Indicators: Report all results in annual ECHO and Family Center Council Evaluation Report

- A.1.1** Parent Infant Relationship Global Assessment Scale (PIRGAS) and Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO) scores will increase between pre and post testing in specific programs
- A.1.2** Social Emotional child scores increase on Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessments
- B.1.1** Initiate KID Connects model in 2017 with one site pilot. By 2023, sites and trained staff will increase beyond 2017 levels through provisions of the LAUNCH Together grant. LAUNCH Together is targeting three sites for 2017-18
- B.1.2** Increase child growth in social and emotional competence by 20%, fall to spring, in early learning environments, as measured by the TS Gold Assessment
- B.1.3** Identify and address behavior challenges in a timely manner by writing and successfully completing formal behavior plans
- C.1.1** Annual Council training records will reflect social-emotional professional development for 85% of staff for each center, serving children in CPP, Special Education and CCCAP
- D.1.1** 75% of women who have high Pregnancy Related Depression screening scores from a variety of referral sources receive services for Pregnancy Related Depression coordinated by FCPHE and ECHO
- D.1.2** All women who receive Pregnancy Related Depression services also receive support for developing secure mother/child relationships if they desire; tracked and reported by FCPHE and ECHO data base
- D.1.3** Increase to 80% the number of physicians / health care providers who participate in, and form part of the Fremont County early childhood behavioral health system. Baseline: 1 practice screens development; 2 practices refer
- D.1.4** Fremont County enrollment in Medicaid or CHP+ will remain at or above the state level per Kids Count statistics: Baseline FY 14-15: CHP+7.4%, Statewide 6.3%; Medicaid 58.7%; Statewide 41.6%

Health and Well-Being Strategies:

- Coordinate with LAUNCH grant initiatives to provide and secure early childhood mental health consultation in a variety of identified settings between 2017 and 2023
- Provide Circle of Security training and continued implementation for home visitors and clinicians
- Utilize Council's Coordinated Early Childhood Education Action Team to explore and identify training needs in coordination with LAUNCH Together
- Continue Strengthening Families training for families and early childhood care providers at least 2 times per year
- Engage with the Harris Fellowship for early childhood mental health consultation at each assigned center 2 to 4 times per month beginning in 2018-19
- Continue to measure parent-child interaction growth with the PIRGAS (pre and post annually) and PICCOLO (twice per year-pre and post) instruments in selected programs
- Provide training and technical assistance to child care centers and preschool sites to streamline the identification, development and successful implementation of behavioral plans
- Complete the TS GOLD assessment 3 times during the school year to measure social emotional growth and status
- Reflective supervision is made available in coordination with the LAUNCH Together grant
- Kid Connects is implemented in selected childcare sites in coordination with the LAUNCH Together grant by September, 2017
- Provide training for mothers on nutrition, physical activities, importance of preventive health care and characteristics of a healthy pregnancy
- Greet all newborns at St Thomas More Hospital to issue Child Health Passports which provide health and developmental educational materials for families
- Revitalize current Pregnancy Related Depression program; screening, referral, early childhood behavioral health integration including services for maternal mental health and mother/child relationships, tracking and evaluation
- Work in coordination with LAUNCH Together team of primary care providers, St Thomas More Hospital administrators, early childhood mental health specialists and community early childhood providers to develop a model that links children and their families to early childhood behavior health, primary care and early childhood services
- Strengthen and expand data tracking systems to accommodate needs for data collection and reporting through a variety of data sources, for example FCPHE and ECHO data base
- Build capacity by training additional professional staff to increase their expertise in early childhood behavioral health
- Identify barriers and gaps for families attempting to access Medicaid and CHP+ and develop methods to overcome those barriers

Learning and Development Goal: Children enter kindergarten with age appropriate development and the school readiness skills they need to succeed

Learning and Development Objectives:

- A.** Identify children who meet the Colorado Department of Human Services at-risk criteria including CCCAP eligible children through the ECHO Screening and Access Program and enroll them in early childhood services
- B.** Maintain and strengthen Colorado Shines quality rated preschools, childcare homes, and centers that are accredited, accept CCCAP and are staffed with early childhood professionals who have ongoing education and professional developmental opportunities

Learning and Development Outcomes:

- A 1** Maintain full enrollment of children at risk for school success in publically funded state and federal risk programs located at Colorado Shines rated L2-L5 child care centers and preschools. Programs serving children who are at risk include CPP, Preschool Special Education, Early Intervention Colorado, CCCAP, Head Start and Early Head Start
- B 1** Increase the number of highly qualified early childhood professionals in all early childhood preschool, child care homes and centers
- B 2** Engage licensed preschools, centers and child care homes in Colorado Shines Quality Rating Improvement Systems
- B 3** Support teachers' abilities to problem solve behavioral issues and infuse social-emotional competencies within their classrooms

Learning and Development Indicators:

- A.1.1** 90% of children in ECHO Council associated child care centers and preschools entering kindergarten will meet “Widely Held Expectations” for school success on the prekindergarten TS Gold Assessment
- B.1.1** 80% of directors/assistant directors and lead teachers in licensed centers and preschools hold a Colorado Early Childhood Professional Credential 2.0 +
- B.1.2** 80% of lead teachers in ECHO and Family Center Council supported programs will develop a professional development plan in PDIS within 90 days of employment
- B.2.1** The Council will encourage and support licensed preschools, child care homes and centers to participate in the Colorado Shines Quality Rating Improvement System in order to achieve target numbers as determined by the Colorado Department of Human Services
- B.2.2** 75% of licensed childcare centers and homes will be quality rated L2-5; Council will report by site and location
- B.2.3** Annually the Council will prepare an analysis of QI strategies, number of jobs created, and barriers to QI at each participating ECE facility
- B.3.1** Document improved child social-emotional scores from the 2017 baseline from a variety of valid measurement tools used by evidence-based programs, such as Parents As Teachers, Kid Connects, ECMH Specialists, CPP, Preschool Special Education, Head Start, EHS, and others

Learning and Development Strategies:

- Identify and secure funding to support the comprehensive early childhood education services of the ECHO and Family Center Early Childhood Council
- Maintain current and accurate data regarding child outcomes for school readiness
- Maintain collaborative community recruitment, screening and enrollment of children through a single process of entry into publicly funded early childhood programs
- Monitor children's learning and development through ECHO Screening and Access and ongoing TS Gold assessments
- Encourage and promote formal education and professional development for early childhood professionals
- Promote, incorporate and embed the Colorado Shines Quality Improvement and Professional Development Information System
- Develop and maintain written data-sharing agreements with council member agencies, i.e. professional development of staff and other data as needed
- Utilize the Colorado Shines Quality Improvement Navigator to encourage and recruit childcare homes and centers to complete a quality rating level
- Recruit, engage and provide ongoing training and support to sites interested in implementing Pyramid Strategies
- Provide assistance in improving classroom management and developing behavior improvement plans
- Support the recruitment and training of certified/licensed early childhood mental health professionals and specialists in early care and education settings (such as Harris Fellowship, Infant Mental Health Endorsement, Colorado Department of Education Licensure, Licensed Clinical Social Work degree, etc.) in conjunction with LAUNCH Together
- Promote ELG for early childhood educators and special educators by posting on Facebook monthly
- Advertise the advantages of Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System on Facebook monthly, so ECE sites will want to engage in the Colorado Shines rating to promote their site
- Memorandums of Understanding with child care centers or homes will provide Colorado Shines coaching
- Incorporate and maintain the Professional Development Information System (PDIS) as data collection for staff training records

Family Support and Education Goal:

Family knowledge and skills support children's healthy development and learning

Family Support and Education Objectives:

- A.** Enroll families in high quality early childhood programs to build their knowledge and capacity
- B.** Provide access for parents and caregivers or important adults in children's lives for family engagement and leadership opportunities within programs, schools and communities
- C.** Assure that families, including those with high needs, experience timely and coordinated services and supports

Family Support and Education Outcomes:

- A 1** Families participate in high quality parenting / child development programs, services and supports
- B 1** Adults grow in their knowledge of early childhood development, including all developmental domains
- B 2** Children live in safe, secure homes
- C 1** Volunteer and leadership opportunities are readily available for families
- C 2** Families use resources to promote self- reliance and resiliency

Family Support and Education Indicators:

- A.1.1** Increase enrollment by 20% in home visitation and parent education programs from baseline 2017
- B.1.1** Expand the use of Vroom based on 2017 as initial program year
- B.2.1** Decrease the number of founded child abuse cases with children 0 to 5, baseline 2016 from DHS children 0-5 =37, previous year 2015 =42 children
- C.1.1** 20% more parents will be in volunteer leadership roles in early childhood programs, specifically Head Start, Early Head Start, child care centers and preschools beyond 2016 levels
- C.2.1** Utilize program surveys of families to measure parent participation and satisfaction in programs
- C.2.2** Families in the Colorado Community Response (CCR) program identify and access community resources appropriate to their needs
- C.2.3** Greet families of all newborns at St. Thomas More Hospital and provide them with the Child Health Passport, including the book, “What to Do When Your Child is Sick”

Family Support and Education Strategies:

- Identify and maintain methods of delivery of quality programs such as Parents As Teachers, EHS, Love and Logic, Circle of Security, maternal wellness, Vroom, High Conflict Parenting, and Fatherhood Initiative to increase parent knowledge, skills and confidence
- Maximize enrollment in early childhood programs
- Maintain CCR programs; extend family participation to other community programs as they transition from CCR
- Greet all newborns at St Thomas More Hospital to issue Child Health Passports which provide health and developmental educational materials for families
- Provide staff trainings across agencies including Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), trauma-informed care, Circle of Security, perinatal mood disorder, adult learning styles, strengthening families, coaching, Kids Connect, and Vroom in order to improve their practice and skills in working with families
- Recruit, train and utilize appropriate agencies, staff and supervisors in reflective practice and supervision
- Continue Partnership In Early Childhood Education and Services (PIECES) referral process across agencies to screen and enroll children from the child welfare system into high quality early childhood programs
- Identify, through coordination with LAUNCH Together, an array of volunteer and leadership activities and opportunities for family participation
- Promote ELG for parent use by posting on Facebook monthly
- Advertise the advantages of Colorado Shines Quality Rating and Improvement System on Facebook so parents can have a guide to select high quality care for their child